

REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed August 16, 2006, has been received and reviewed. Claims 16 through 27 are currently pending in the application. Claims 17 through 21 and 23 through 27 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 16 and 22 stand rejected. Applicants propose to amend claim 16 and respectfully request reconsideration of the application as with respect to the amendments and analysis presented herein.

Claim Objection

The Examiner objected to claim 16, indicating that it appears that “electric” should be “electrical.” Appropriate correction has been made to claim 16.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Claim Rejections

Claims 16 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

The Examiner indicated that claim 16 is indefinite because it is not clear what is meant by “a longitudinal slot formed therethrough.” Applicants propose to amend claim 16 to indicate that there is a longitudinal slot in both the dielectric film and the electrically conductive layer. Thus, the dielectric film is amended to include “a dielectric film . . . and a first longitudinal slot formed therethrough,” and the electrically conductive layer is amended to include “an electrically conductive layer . . . a second longitudinal slot formed ~~therethrough~~ through the electrically conductive layer and substantially aligned with the first longitudinal slot in the dielectric film.”

Claim 22 depends from claim 16. With the amendment to claim 16, claim 22 includes the changes made in claim 16 to indicate that there is a longitudinal slot in both the dielectric film and the electrically conductive layer.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Obviousness Rejections

Obviousness Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 6,268,650 to Kinsman et al. in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0008307 to Dickey

Claims 16 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinsman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,268,650) in view of Dickey (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0008307). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

M.P.E.P. 706.02(j) sets forth the standard for a Section 103(a) rejection:

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, **the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations.** The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). (Emphasis added).

Regarding claim 16, the Examiner indicated, in part, that Kinsman discloses “an electrically conductive layer (28) adhered to the dielectric film and operably coupled to the at least one conductive via, the electrically conductive layer comprising at least one electrical current isolation slot (50) formed therethrough, at least a part of the electric current isolation slot is coextensive with material of the dielectric film.” (Emphasis added).

The Examiner then indicated that Kinsman fails to disclose “a longitudinal slot formed therethrough,” however, Dickey discloses a “semiconductor device that has a longitudinal slot (44) formed therethrough (For Example: See Figure 2).” Finally, the Examiner states that “it would have been obvious to include a longitudinal slot formed therethrough as disclosed in Dickey because it aids in providing spacing and/or separation (For Example: See Figure 2 and Paragraph 31).”

With respect to Kinsman, Applicants assert that Kinsman does not disclose an electrical current isolation slot wherein at least a part of the electrical current isolation slot is coextensive with material of the dielectric film. In Kinsman, the Examiner is defining the electrical current isolation slot as element 50 in FIG. 1. However, as stated by Kinsman et al., and illustrated in

FIG. 1, “open area 78 is defined in a central portion of the plastic film 30. The open area 78 may be concentric with the open area 50 of the metal layer 28 and the bond pad portion of the active surface 14.” (Column 4, lines 17-20). Kinsman et al. then state that “open area 78 of the plastic film 30 may be larger than the open area 50 of the metal layer 28 to leave an exposed metal region (an inner bondable metal surface) 80.” (Column 4, lines 22-24).

Thus, in Kinsman, open area 50 is not coextensive with material of the dielectric film 30. In other words, the material of the dielectric film 30 does not cover any of the open area 50 in the metal layer 28. In contrast, the electrical current isolation slots of the present invention (as illustrated in FIGS. 2, 3A, 3B, and 6A-6C, for example) are at least partially coextensive with the dielectric material. In other words, the dielectric material at least partially covers the electrical current isolation slots.

With respect to Dickey, it appears to Applicants that Dickey includes a dielectric film layer but not an electrically conductive layer. Thus, the longitudinal slot whether it is considered to be element 44 or 46 of Dickey’s FIG. 2, cannot be a longitudinal slot formed through the electrically conductive layer, as recited in amended claim 16. Furthermore, the Examiner has stated that the motivation to combine Dickey with Kinsman is because the longitudinal slot formed therethrough, as disclosed in Dickey, aids in providing spacing and/or separation. However, the longitudinal slot in the present invention is to provide access to bonding pads on the semiconductor die, which is apparent from the specification for the present invention stating that, “[t]he electrically conductive layer 120 includes a longitudinal slot 126 formed along the center of the electrically conductive layer 120 and traversing lengthwise such that the bond pads 112 on the semiconductor die 110 are exposed through the longitudinal slot 126.”

As a result, Applicants assert that the prior art references, when combined, do not teach or suggest all the claim limitations, as is required for a proper obviousness rejection. Furthermore, Applicants assert that the Examiner has not presented a reasonable motivation to combine the teachings of Kinsman and Dickey, since the motivation to combine the references, as asserted by the Examiner, does not address the purpose of the elements for which the combination has been asserted. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) obviousness rejection of claim 16 be withdrawn.

Regarding claim 22, the nonobviousness of amended independent claim 16 precludes a rejection of claim 22 which depends therefrom because a dependent claim is obvious only if the independent claim from which it depends is obvious. *See In re Fine*, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596, 1600 (Fed. Cir. 1988), *see also* MPEP § 2143.03. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) obviousness rejection to claim 22.

ENTRY OF AMENDMENTS

The proposed amendments to claim 16 above should be entered by the Examiner because the amendments are supported by the as-filed specification and drawings, do not add any new matter to the application, and are responsive to the Examiner's request for clarification of indefiniteness in claim 16. If the Examiner determines that the amendments do not place the application in condition for allowance, entry is respectfully requested upon filing of a Notice of Appeal herein.

CONCLUSION

Claims 16 and 22 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, he is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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